

PUGET SOUND ADVOCATES FOR RETIREMENT ACTION ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

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**JEFF JOHNSON OF PUGET SOUND ADVOCATES FOR RETIREMENT ACTION, WASHINGTON STATE
LABOR COUNCIL**

INTERVIEWEE: JEFF JOHNSON

INTERVIEWERS: ANGIE BARTELS, KAREN RICHTER

SUBJECTS: Jeff Johnson, farmworkers, Washington State Labor Council, labor, union, community, union leaders, labor movement, work

LOCATION: Seattle, Washington

DATE: August 14, 2018

INTERVIEW LENGTH: 01:23:21

FILE NAME: JohnsonJeff_PSARA_2018_Audio.mp3

ANGIE BARTELS 00:00:03: Today is Tuesday, August 14, 2018. My name is Angie Bartels, and I am here today with Karen Richter. We are members of an organization called PSARA: Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action, and this taping is a part of our oral history project. This recording takes place at the Washington State Labor Council offices in Seattle, Washington. Today, Karen and I are with Jeff Johnson. Jeff is the president of the Washington State Labor Council and has held this position since 2011. Jeff has worked for the WSLC since 1986. So welcome, Jeff, to our interview project.

JEFF JOHNSON 00:00:56: Thank you, Angie. Thank you, Karen.

ANGIE 00:00:59: So we'd like to start with just finding out a little bit about your background, where you were born, your family, a little bit of information about your family structure, etc. So if you could please tell us a little bit about that.

JEFF 00:01:16: You bet. I'll be glad to. So I grew up on Long Island, about thirty miles outside of New York City. And when I was seven, my father died at the workplace of a heart attack. So it left my mom with three kids under the age of ten. My older sister was ten. I was seven and my youngest sister was eighteen months old. And of course, my mom had been—he goes by TJ, Thelma Johnson, and she's my hero. She had been out of the workforce for about twelve years. And, immediately had to go back to work to help the family survive. And so she went to work, actually, for the local small town Chamber of Commerce. And she earned the grand sum of twenty five cents an hour. Which— No, actually I'm sorry, I think it was seventy five cents an hour, which was the minimum wage at the time.

ANGIE 00:03:02: What year was that?

JEFF 00:02:54: So this was 1959. Yeah.

ANGIE 00:02:27: So you were born in 1951?

JEFF 00:02:32: Yeah, I'll be 67 later this year. So my mom, actually tomorrow, August 15, is her birthday. She'll be 95. But yeah, correct. The figure was a buck an hour, I'm sorry, it was a buck an hour, that was a minimum wage. I should have this memorized. I've done so much work over time on the minimum wage. But yes, she earned \$1 an hour. And my mom didn't have more than a high school education, but she had a lot of street smarts. And she was just an elite organizer. And she met a young politician who ran for city council member, and then town supervisor, and then state legislature in the State of New York, and she was basically his campaign manager. Which is very smart about meeting people, getting the word out, helping him basically organize those events that would get him out there and on center stage. And so she kind of parlayed his success into a job first with the town, the county, and then a state job. And it was really because of city, county, and state employee contracts and [collective] bargaining that our family went from what would have been a disaster to a "middle class" lifestyle. So we were able to have a modest house. My older sister, who has been plagued with asthma since she was a baby, had all the medication she needed. My younger sister needed braces and whatnot, that was paid for. My broken bones were all paid for, we could take an occasional vacation and, and all three kids were able to go to college. Now, part of that was because of these good wages and benefits that my mom earned and she saved, and part of it was back then the social security program in the country actually paid for dependents of those that were deceased. So, each month a small stipend would go into an account, which then also helped us pay for college. But I really think I give my mom a whole lot of credit for the formation of my sisters and myself and we eventually ended up doing. And she was, like I say, my hero. She's very wise. She told me, "Jeff, just a few things you got to understand in life," she'd say, "Always work hard, work hard, give it your best, you never know what's going to happen tomorrow or the next day and her life."

JEFF 00:03:36: Certainly, it was true for her. She was very big on saying, "Encourage meeting and respecting those with different opinions, than then you yourself will learn much from that, and your life will be richer if you do that." And then finally, she taught all of us to stand up for what's right.

JEFF 00:05:24: She said, "Don't be pushed around, stand up when you see a wrong stand up for it. Because if you do, chances are someone else will. And then when there are enough of you standing up, you can do something."

JEFF 00:05:59: And she was reflecting partially on her growing up in Pittsburgh. She— Her family came to this country around the turn of that century, the 1900s, around 1900. And they were in the working class district, down by the Monongahela River where the steel mills were, and they had come from Croatia. And so there was a fair amount of, ethnic teasing and discrimination and whatnot. And so she learned on the streets how to be tough, how to be strong, how to have pride in who you were and where you came from. So, she gave us that. You know: that good immigrant education. Right? Yeah, so that was kind of how we got our start.

ANGIE 00:06:57: Right. Great. So it sounds like your mom was a huge inspiration to you.

JEFF 00:07:03: Totally, totally, totally.

ANGIE 00:07:07: Wonderful, so where did you go to high school, where you go to college and give us a little bit of that information?

JEFF 00:07:14: Yeah. So I, all of my, my two sisters, I went to, we grew up in a small town called Oyster Bay, on the North Shore of Long Island. It was in a county called Nassau County. It was basically an Italian and Irish working class, little village. It was originally a fishing village. So we went to the public high school, their Oyster Bay public high school. And, over the period of time we were there, it changed quite a bit. When I was

seven, I went to—I was in second grade. And the little wooden structure right across the street from the high school. As the town grew they built different elementary schools and whatnot. By the time I was a senior in high school, there were so many kids that they had split sessions, so we actually had to be at school at 06:15. And then around noon, we're done for the day, which actually worked out fine for me. Because, I started working pretty early at a pretty early age. And I do my high school classes at noon, I'd go grab a quick lunch and then I went to a local cabinet makers shop. Where I apprenticed with, with this really skilled Italian craftsman. And, for about two years, I worked for him and learned how to build pretty beautiful cabinets. And, probably would still be doing that today. Had it not been for my mom who basically said, Nope, you're going to school. So I went to school. And while she was wise, I tell you, the irony of the whole thing was, you know, I did find in school, it just wasn't where my mind was at the time. And so when it came time to pick a school, you know, I didn't put a whole lot of thought into it. My older sister went to Georgetown University in Washington DC to their language school. And she's quite a good linguist and ended up making a life of running a language school and traveling around the world. Anyway, she went to Georgetown. I asked her if I could come down and visit so I went down for a weekend. I said, "Okay, that's the school I want to go to."

And I actually don't think my grades were good enough alone to get in. But as it turned out, I did an interview with an alumnus of the University and it just turns out when I arrived at the houses by assess looks really familiar. I had built the kitchen cabinets for this guy. And so when I went, "Oh, yeah! I recognize that work." And, he was very impressed. And I think that, I think that did a lot towards getting me access to the university. But anyway, but that was a, that was a good place to go to school for me it was Washington DC, it the year before 1968, where the riots after the murder of Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, my sister had been working at one of the main Department Stores in downtown DC called the Hecht department store. And they had to evacuate because of the fires.

JEFF 00:10:45: So the Vietnam War was kind of at its peak. So for a 17 year old coming from a small town, I'll be 30 miles outside of New York City at, you know, it was a real awakening for me. Yet, like I say, the civil rights movement to Vietnam, more than women's movement. And here, I am away from home for the first time and all of this excitement and turmoil and whatnot. And, within a few months of being at the university, I found myself participating in the mass mobilizations that were happening around the war, running away from police and getting tear gassed. And it was, it was the beginning of an education that I don't think I would have gotten otherwise, and led me to, basically start beginning to set a trajectory for where my life was gonna go. Because for me, it was alright, I understand enough about this, to want to go out there and put myself on the line and get arrested and stuff like that. But I don't know enough yet about what are the root causes of this stuff. And so for me, it began, I'm kind of a personal journey of understanding why things work the way they do. And I changed my major from political science, which was fine, but to economics, because I figured, Alright, I got to understand how this economy operates. And, you know, and so I had lots of wonderful experiences. And in Washington, DC, you know, I realized that economics was the subject I needed to study, but I needed to study political economy. And I couldn't do it there because Georgetown was far too conservative of a place to do it. And so I, I had heard about, I did some research and I found on the East Coast, there were two schools and universities and graduate programs that offered a Marxian analysis of the economy, and one was the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and the other was the New School for Social Research in Manhattan. And I chose the new school, in part because I'm familiar with New York City having grown up around it, but also there was this, this legacy, kind of intellectual pursuit from Hannah Arendt, the German philosopher, who came, you know, who fled Germany, Nazi Germany, with other scholars, and, and they created the graduate faculty at the new school. And I just thought, what an incredible place to go to school. And they had some really brilliant young political economists that had been radicalized and the 60s, and, so it, it gave me an opportunity to figure out what it is I was missing from my education and really understanding what lay beneath, the inequalities that I saw out there, and giving me a fundamental building block explanations of that. And so, as I went on, I went through I took my PhD written exams and my oral exams, and I started writing a thesis, but I all this time I'm

living in, at first Manhattan and then Brooklyn, and living with others that were both academics and activists and I was becoming more and more active. And my first foray into the labor movement was not as a union member, but as a volunteer for a rank and file upsurge within the transit workers union. They were trying to house the then existing long time White, trade union leader with a rank and file African American leader who was very dynamic. And so we handed out leaflets and subway stations around the city and all did all sorts of really, really cool stuff. And so more and more I got involved in the labor movement, and I got less and less interested in my dissertation.

JEFF 00:15:28: And I think I got two and a half chapters done. And I went through about three or four different advisors. And finally, I admitted to myself, yeah, I'm not gonna finish this thing. It's just, I'm having too much fun. And, but also had to make a living. So I had what was called an ABD-all but dissertation, and which is actually a technical term. At the time, I thought, wow, that's convenient. Sounds cool. EBD, you know, but long story short, I was doing a lot of adjunct teaching. Part time as a part time instructor. I taught for the National Congress at neighborhood women, I talked, I taught at UAW district 65 in the city, I taught for the International ladies garment workers union. And basically, my office was a subway and I'd go from place to place union hall, the union hall, and teaching popular economics. But then I heard about a protest.

ANGIE 00:16:28: How did you find those gigs? Yeah,

JEFF 00:16:33: that's exactly what it was. So part of it was word of mouth. I mean, of course, at the New School, I'm, you know, I'm studying there with about 60 other men and women who are all, you know, studying radical political economics, right. And so we're all we're all trying to, you know, support ourselves, right. And so a lot of word of mouth. And, you know, folks say, "Well, you should teach here, because they have an open mind about the curriculum and whatnot."

And so, a lot of it was that and, and part of it was through the volunteer work I did with the unions, right. You know, because once I have worked with one than ideal to another, now, like the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, I'm not the most progressive Union. But they saw that I'd worked with the UAW, so it's like, okay, that kind of gave the blessing and I could teach in their program. But I heard about this one school that was part of the State University system, and the Empire State College, and they had something called the Harry Van Arsdale Center for Labor Studies. And so Harry Van Arsdale was the leader of the largest International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local in the country, local three. And after the war, in the 50s, he did a series of things that were really I thought quite progressive and novel for a union leader. He wanted to make sure that all of his apprentices had at least a community college degree, and labor studies, okay. And so he cut a deal with the State University of New York and said, we've got two to 3,000 apprentices at any given time, and we're going to run them all through your program, okay. And we ran it out of a high school at night, in, in the Chelsea section of Manhattan. So two nights a week, young men and women would come in and take their technical apprenticeship classes, and then afterwards, they would take economics that I taught that take creative, English writing that take social, you know, kind of sociology courses, psychology courses, that kind of thing. So when they finished their five years of apprenticeship and Dame journey level status, they also got an Associates of Arts degree from the State University of New York. So yeah, so I love that program. And I didn't have to worry about textbooks, in fact, that we, myself and other colleagues, we put together textbooks of basically Xeroxes of, you know, great readings from across the board and would kind of staple them together. And that was the textbook Right? Since it was a pretty unique school, we got to use some pretty unique pedagogical techniques and a lot of Paulo Friere's techniques, a lot of Socratic method or role playing and stuff like that. It was just great fun. And so I did that for about three and a half years and then the program I'll set a bachelor's per group program, and they were starting a master's program and that was a full time faculty. And so there was a position open up there and they encouraged me to apply I did and I got it and so for three years, I taught full time at the, at the Empire State College, and they're, particularly in the master's program, I got to teach some seminars with trading and leaders, including an old time, head of the Communication Workers International Union:

Morty Bar. So he was one of my students, which was a real trip for me because I'm 26 years old, and he's the head of this international union. That's very progressive, right, as well. So I figured I'd learned more from them. And then I talked to them. So it worked out well for me. But a great experience, being there in the city, and, you know, my wife at the time, then she and I wanted to have a family and that we didn't think that Brooklyn, we just didn't want to raise the child in Brooklyn, right. And so we were thinking, Where can we go? For me, there had to be a strong labor movement. I wanted mountains and I wanted ocean. So that pretty much limited us to the coasts, right. (laughs) You know, so we looked at Vermont, which, believe it or not, is still close to the ocean and parts of it are. And we looked at Maine, in fact, I had two interviews up in Maine one was from a fellow that I went to graduate school with, he had a full time gig at

JEFF 00:21:34: Oh, it's in Waterville, Maine, I think it is Bowdoin College. Pretty exclusive liberal arts college. Right. And so he was going on sabbatical. And so he encouraged me to apply for the job. I went up there and yeah, I didn't get it. I didn't get it. So with my wife at the time, she had grown up in Portland, Oregon, her dad had been research director for the International Woodworkers Union. And she loved it out this way. And I'd never been out here. So he said, okay, so we rented a truck. We're gonna drive to Seattle. And before I picked up the truck, I got a call from the main Public Employees Union, and they had a position open up for lead lobbyists. So they flew me up there, and I interviewed for that job. And I thought, okay, this is interesting and beautiful and whatnot. And then they caught me and said, Well, you did great kid. But the guy we hired had 20 years experience with EFT. And so we took him. Okay, so in the meantime, I'd canceled the truck. So I came back, we rented a truck. My wife and I drove cross country. At a time in SeaTac, you could, if you stayed a night in the hotel, you can park your car for free for a week. Right? So we parked this big old twenty four foot rider and moving truck with all of our possessions in it, and it's kind of backed it up to the fence so that no one could break into it. We rented a car. And we drove, you know, circumference around Seattle. We could do an hour right? Got ourselves an hour north, you know, this is 1986, summer of 1986. I want to tell you, so I drove all across country and Tina, my wife was pregnant with our first daughter. And you know, it's beautiful, right across country when we're coming on Eastern Washington. And then we see the Stuart rains, just before we get into the pass, and it's like, wow, this is incredible. We crossed the pass, and it's gray, tar raining and this is third week in July. And I'm thinking, Oh, come on. I just left, you know, Brooklyn, New York City where it was bright and sunny. And you know, it's summer. That whole first week. Gray, it was raining. We rented a car and we're driving around on the sixth day I kid you not. We drove down until Olympia we parked across from Sylvester Park to get out of the car. The sun came out shining down on Sylvester apartments, okay, we're gonna live here. But really, there was no more fun. It was like, Okay, we're gonna live here. And within two days, we found an apartment. And I had enough sufferance from my teaching gig that I knew I could take about three months find a job and so I spent I went up and down the I-5 corridor from Eugene to Bellingham, and I met with every union leader who would see me I applied to every university, college, community college out there, and I paid a courtesy call to the Washington State Labor Council. because I had been in the labor movement long enough to know that if you're going to do it, right, pay your respects, right. So I went in and I met a fellow named Larry Kenny, who was, you know, the President, two presidents ago. And, and Larry, for those who knows him, there was a real character, and bit of an acerbic—I don't know—personality, and quite demanding anyway. So I'm sitting down talking to him just saying, “Hey, here's who I am,” and just wanted to pay my respects come visit, find out things ago. And “If you have any suggestions for me?” during that conversation, it turns out that he used to read a journal that I used to write for it was a little leftist journal from New York City called economic notes. And it was created by Daniel De Leon, a socialist back in the [19]30s and [19]40s. And so it's a monthly publication. And so I used to write articles in that. And so we made the connection somewhere in the conversation. “Oh, yeah. That Jeff Johnson.” Yeah. And I figured about fifty people in New York read it. Right? (laughs)-Not that head of the state [labor] fed in Washington state actually read it. And so-internet, yeah.

JEFF 00:26:22: So it's like, “Oh, my goodness.” So it's kind of cool. So he said, “Well, tell you what, I got a research project for you.” And also, because in the conversation, one of the jobs I had—because teaching

adjunct teaching didn't pay a whole lot—I had spent some time working for the Center for Transnational Corporations, which is part of the United Nations. So he was particularly interested in comparisons of, how the United States ranks on various social indicators with other countries. Right? And so he figured since I worked there, I could do this research pretty quickly for him. So I said, “Great. Okay. Just gonna pay me That's wonderful.” And so I— computers were just coming out. I mean, it was not so. Well, they were around there are nine wide use. Exactly. Yeah, you computer for the size of this room. Right. I had to had a little tiny Kaypro machine. But if there was no internet so that the successful process exactly is glorified typewriter. Right? Yeah. So anyway, so I got on the phone, and I called my former boss at the UN. And I said, “Hey, like, it's a project I got, can you send me the latest data that you've got? So I can compile it?” So he did. And unfortunately, with UN data, it's always, you know, six, seven years out of date. So anyway, I put this report together. I'm pretty proud of it. I take it in I show Larry. And he looks he says, “This crap. out of date, this is you know what? I'm looking for much more recent.” I certainly this is best data that's out there. So here's another project for the kid. So he gave me another project. Anyway, I brought that one back. He seemed to like that one. Okay. And then that's that, I guess, third conversation with him. I realized about halfway through it. He was interviewing me for a job that had been open for about eighteen months he had never filled. And at the end of the discussion, he said, Alright, you're hired. That's like, really? Okay. And he said, Can you I think it was on a Thursday, he said, Can you start on Monday? And I said, “No.” I said, “No, my wife's expecting and we think next week, maybe we'll do so a week after my baby's born, I'll start for you.” And he pause. I thought, I just shot my chances. Right. And this is kind of staring me down and said, okay, and oh, my God. And it's funny, I learned to really appreciate Larry. He wasn't everyone's cup of tea. And, but he was, he was a brilliant man. And, you know, so no social graces bedside manner was terrible. I remember, I was it was about two months after I got the job, right. And we're in Olympia, and he and I are walking from our office there up to the hill. And he said to me, “Jeff, I'm not sure I did the right thing hiring you” I'm like, Excuse me. I just looked at my said, “No, you did a damn good job. Hire me. I'm gonna be the best at that time Research Director you've ever had.” And he said, “Okay, well see.” That's the kind of guy he was that the you know, once you once you understood how he ticked you know, it was okay. I mean, he, he introduced me to a part of my life, which now is kind of a fundamental core of it. About a month after that, a man named Tomas Villanueva called up Larry, and asked him to meet him for lunch in downtown Olympia. And Larry said, Jeff, I've got a meeting with the head of a Farm Worker Union. Do you want to come? In that? I mean, look, I grew up outside of city biggest city, you know, I don't know, farms, you know, from from grocery stores. So it's like, yeah, when I go, and so I'm sitting in this meeting, just listening. And Tomas says to Larry, and you know Thomas, right. I mean, but they don't make very many human beings like that. But here's this really dimin, diminutive guy that speaks with such passion and such moral integrity, right. And he says to Larry,

JEFF 00:30:54: “So we have this new union, you know, it's not even a year old yet. We need your help. And the question is, are you going to help us? Are you going to do what every other afl-cio leader has done, which is stab us in the back when it's convenient?” Yeah, and I just like, I'm holding my breath this whole time ago. Whoa, I didn't know people talk like this. Right, you know, and, and I said, No more, we're gonna help. And he turns to me, he says, “Jeff, do you want to work with Tomas” I was like, Oh, my God. “I want to give him my left arm to work with Tomas. Yes, I've worked with us.” And it began a glorious friendship. We became not just work partners, but really close friends. And, and we worked on so many issues together. You know, when I started working with Tomas farm workers were not covered under unemployment insurance workers comp, minimum wage. They hit there were no child labor standards in our state for inagh For farm worker kids. There were no pesticide protections, right. And, you know, together—and Tony, Tony Lee was, was part of the coalition worked very closely with Tony when he was with the Washington association of churches, and John Boonstra and Michael Ramos and others, but Tony was like, “Okay, here's another incredible passionate human being with a moral core that, you know, was miles thick.” Right? It was like, “Wow, what partners to work with.” And, so within five years, we covered farmworkers under unemployment insurance, we ran the first minimum wage initiative, which covered farm workers. We got them covered under worker comp through a law

suit. We created a pesticide control board. We wrote child labor standards, which basically kept farm worker kids out of the fields. And, and we worked on some other health and safety issues, we finally got farm workers covered under their own section of the health and safety laws. Prior to that they were just, you know, referred to in the General section,

ANGIE 00:33:15: They were excluded from all the federal laws, as they were, you know, they were bargain down. That's stabbed in the back.

JEFF 00:33:23: That is absolutely right. I mean, you're right when they created the Fair Labor Standards Act on the Wagner Act, naturally Relations Act. Southern senators trying to make sure that black farmers, farm workers and tenant farmers didn't have rights. And then through Tomas and others, I learned about the Bursera program out here in the West. And what we learned were that conditions hadn't changed much for these farm workers. And the thing about Tomas, I could say, every time he'd come to Olympia, he'd stay with me, my wife and my kids. And so we really formed a friendship and then I'd go out there on state with him. And his wife or Tenzin was just salt of the earth. I mean, she put up with an incessant traveling and, I think he earned \$6,000 a year from the farm workers, so we were constantly raising money for them. And in fact, John Boonstra, Roger Yaki, Tony and I, and a few others, there's a point at which Tomas they were going to lose their house. Right. And so we raised enough money to save their house. And then we helped Tomas get a job with the state because the, his health was declining and he just couldn't put bread on the table. He had a big family, so, but those were incredible times. incredible coalition, all efforts that work with Tony and others led to the creation of the livable wage coalition that came out of that first minimum wage initiative. And it was the beginning of really strong, faith based labor based community based coalition's in the state. That, we have a proud history

ANGIE 00:35:24: Yeah, with when we had Archbishop Brandon hen house, he was just such a strong leader and coalition partner in all of those struggles. Yeah.

JEFF 00:35:36: Really was.

KAREN RICHTER 00:35:37: What years are this Jeff?

JEFF 00:35:39: Yeah. So this is basically 1986 through about, say, 1993 in that period of time, and it was an intense period of time. Also the Chateau sandwich shop boycott began at that time. It's interesting because we Toma Lupe Gambella, who had been an attorney with Columbia legal services, he was the I believe he was. He was either the first or the first handful of Chicanos who graduated from UW [University of Washington] Law School. Lupe and his uncle I think it's [Ernesto?] Gamboa is still a professor at the UW. I may have the name wrong, I'm forgetting things. But I'd say but where I was going with that was in 1993, we had had an incredible election in 1992. And which gave us something like I think it was 28 is either 28 or 30 Democratic senators, so way above the majority, and we had like 63 Democrats in the House, so way above majority there as well. So we wrote collective bargaining bill for farmworkers, patterned after what they've done in California.

ANGIE 00:37:06: And California Labor Relations Act?

JEFF 00:37:09: That's right. That's right. So we wanted to

ANGIE 00:37:13: Down in California as well, because that's where I'm in.

JEFF 00:37:15: Okay, there you go. There you go. So we made some variations based off of what we learned and had learned in California; the ALRA. Anyway, so we wrote this bill, and we gave it to Mike Heavey, Representative Mike Peavy in the house, who was Larry Kenny's nephew. Because Larry Kenny's family name

really was heavy, he changed it— Because Larry, his family couldn't keep him they put him up for adoption. He was very bitter. He changed his last name. So interesting stories here. And then we gave it to Senator Margarita Prentice in the Senate. And what was interesting about this was in the house, Mike created this kind of not a task force, but a committee, labor agric and growers, and for ten weeks, once a week would meet in the evening, to battle this stuff out to argue this stuff out. Right. And it was, the growers brought up attorneys from California, they flew them up every week. I mean, it was—it was hard process. On the Senate side, Margarita was a fairly new senator, but she had been a good friend of ours and the foreign workers. But she was involved in some prison reform stuff. And so the first two weeks of session, she was gone. And so we had no contact with her long story short, she kind of abdicated the bill and Jim Jesernig, senator from Tri Cities later became head of the Department of Agriculture in the state and other things, basically took the bill and wanted to turn it into an arbitration-only bill. Well, at the time, that wasn't working for Lupe [Gamboa] or Tomas [Villanueva] or me. So we were fighting this bill all the way through, and at the end, we had to kill it. We killed it right. farm workers and the Labor Council. Now the historical irony of this is that a decade or decade and a half later, the [United Farmworkers of America] in California pushed for an arbitration bill. Right? because the ALRA wasn't working. It had the same problems that the NLRA had— the National Labor Relations Act where— employers basically with impunity could stop the election process or stop the first contract but

ANGIE 00:39:45: Basically what they did is they would ensure that the California Labor Relations Act— the board that executed it— was not adequately funded.

JEFF 00:40:01: That's right. And we also know that no matter what sector you're organizing in, if a votes been taken, and a year goes by without a contract, workers start losing interest and saying, “Well, you're not really helping me.” So, the irony being, a decade and a half later UFW puts in an arbitration-first contract bill. And had we had more foresight at the time, we may have actually had the prototype in our own state. But instead, we killed the bill. And it was hard because we were calling on people like [Reverend Raymond Hunthausen Catholic Archbishop of Seattle] to call up Marguerite Prentice and say, “No, this bill should die.” This was not an easy thing. But because the farmworkers had such a, you know—I mean, it was their folks that we're talking about, and they were saying, “We can't live under this form of a bill.” People went along with us. So anyway, interesting part of our state history, but yeah, the alliances and, the camaraderie that was built during those times. Were really truly amazing. And for me, personally, it was an incredible time of growth. And has really impacted everything I've done in my life from the way I've raised my family to what I care about.

ANGIE 00:41:32: So it sounds like there were several people who inspired you during that time. Yeah. And help to give you vision and a sense of what path to tread. And so you said that teach French about 1993?

JEFF 00:41:54: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. So that's, we, so at the same time, I'm sure this is anything I've ever said in public, but I'll say it for the records. You know, Governor Lowry, had been elected in 1992. And, you know, I'd mentioned that President Larry Kenney was a real character. And it wasn't everyone's cup of tea. And so Mike Lowry, on the labor did a celebration that after the elections each year at the King County labor, Seattle, labor, Temple, First Avenue, and, you know, it was they would invite, you know, all those who had won the elections come in, meet with labor, folks. So I was there and, and Governor elect Lowry was there. And he comes up to me, and he says, “Jeff, we don't know each other. But he said, I've heard a lot about you. And what I've heard, you and I are going to be good partners. But I can't work with your boss.”

KAREN 00:43:03: confronted that to you?

JEFF 00:43:04: Yeah, I was like I was I was totally shocked. Honestly, I can't work with your boss. We just don't get along. And so yeah, you got to do something about this. You got to like be the intermediary or something like that. Right. I'm the kind of stuff this is problematic. So in Larry had gotten into a bit of hot water

with his own board over some some decisions he made. And like I said, he didn't have a good bedside manner. So and there was a candidate on the board, there was a Executive Board member on the board that I knew was interested in running for the position the next time the election came up. So I went to talk to him. And I talked to his aide, who was Robby Stern, who I had heard up but had never met. And Robby, and I hit it off immediately. You know, here's a here's a soulmate. Here's someone that, you know, I can truly work with. So we started talking and, and came up with a plan, which was talked to then Governor Lowry and asked him whether he would make an offer that would have been hard to refuse by Larry Kenney, to create a job for him. You know, Larry knew he was in trouble. Larry pretty much knew he was going to lose the next election. But the question was, you know, do we go through the agony of that weight? And in the meantime, do we have this bad relationship with this new governor, or do we get someone someone else and so long story short, the governor offered Larry, a position on a three member board on the Washington State Tax Appeals Board and Larry at one time during his career had stepped away from labor and got a certified public accountant degree how I've been Yeah, so he was probably the most qualified person on that board, right? Because a lot of his appointments are political in the negative sense, right. But for Larry, it was like, This guy actually knew this stuff. And so Larry accepted, and Rick Bender was appointed by the board. And within a year, Robbie was hired as Rick's Special Assistant, which began a 15 year period of time, where Robbie and I, we're pretty much inseparable, both his work partners as well as friends. And together, we were able to really continue that coalitional work that had been happening all through the Farmworker period of time, and trawl labor and community closer and closer together, working on a whole range of progressive issues, while we paid attention to the bread and butter workers compensation and unemployment insurance, collective bargaining that our affiliates wanted us to pay attention to, but it created-a Robbie's my best friend has been since 1993.

ANGIE 00:46:16: Jeff, could you give us an example of what work you did to bring labor and community organizations together?

JEFF 00:46:27: Yeah, so a lot of it. So some of it came out of the minimum wage movement, right, we ran away from three minimum wage initiatives. Right. The first one was in 1988. The second one was in 1998. And that was a much bigger community labor coalition. And partly because of the content, we put in one, we actually raised the wages, you know, up to 650 a hour, but we indexed our minimum wage, the cost of living index. So we were the first state in the country to do that. And so that was attractive to a lot of community groups and, and organizations of color. It's like, this is substantial, right? And so that forged some really tight, tighter relationships and allowed us to work on a whole range of other issues together. But then I think the next big piece that drew us together with community was work around immigration reform. And, we started working with Hilary Stern, from Castle Latina, back when they were down on Western Avenue. Right. And, and we got involved in the worker center movement around the country, right, we were looking at what

ANGIE 00:47:53: now we're talking on national level, yeah. Immigration. Yeah,

JEFF 00:47:56: This is big, right. And so, you know, unfortunate. So, so it was interesting, because, so Hillary, I used to invite Hillary to our conventions to speak. And the first the first convention, she came to, to speak at a pretty tepid response from the audience. And as, as Hillary is walking off the stage and out, one of our delegates, accosted her, not physically, but kind of got her face and just, anti immigrant, and Hillary and I drove over together, and we're driving back. And so she's explaining this man go, Oh, my God, we got so much work to do. So, Robbie, and I made a point at every convention, we would have plenary discussions on immigration reform, we would have workshops on immigration reform, we would invite community groups and people of color to talk to our intelligence, educate them. And then fortunately, the AFL CIO got a conscience. And they, along with, the faith based groups, did a nationwide set of hearings around immigrant immigrant immigration issues. Once again, they bypassed at Northwest like, we don't exist, right. So we held our own. So we joined forces with the UFW with cocoon, the farm worker union and community organizing group and Oregon as well

as the Oregon AFL CIO. And we chose a church important. And we had our own immigrant workers hearing, which was just fantastic. I mean, it was just, you know, and the courageousness of these, these undocumented workers, you know, it just kind of blew your mind away. So that work really tightened our connections with community members that we hadn't had as much relationship with before so APIC you know, with

ANGIE 00:50:00: APIC: Asian Pacific Islander coalition

JEFF 00:50:03: That's right. You know our own—

ANGIE 00:50:07: UFW that you mentioned before United Farmworkers union.

JEFF 00:50:10: That's right. CASA Latina well, and castle. So in this process come back to this but we worked on CASA Latina becoming an affiliate of ours at the state labor council. But so we widen our scope within the Latino community. And as well as trying to make inroads in the African American community, that was the hardest one, and I'm still not sure we're quite there yet, as well as I'd like us to be. But maybe later, we can talk about this. For the last two and a half years, we've begun this very intensive conversation about race in the labor movement, and we've had help from nationally recognized African American leader Bill Fletcher, who has been helping us do this deep dive discussion and work. But anyway, it was around immigrant rights that we drew even closer to the community and we nationally AFL-CIO around 2008, they made an agreement with a group called M Valon National Day Labor Organization, which most of the worker centers around the country belong to including CASA Latina. So as soon as the national AFL CIO did that, I sat down with Hillary and we wrote up an application and we sent it into the AFL CIO, and said, "Hey, we would like them to affiliate with us at the state labor council." Nothing, we hear nothing, here nothing. So we applied again. Okay, so the second application and we don't hear anything, I call up the top lawyer for that it was President Sweeney, and say, "what's going on? What do we got to do here? Oh, we've applied twice. Now. You know, you have an agreement with the national organization, why can't we have one with, you know, with our state worker center?" And he said, "Well, you got some problems with IBEW"

ANGIE 00:52:14: IBEW being?

JEFF 00:52:17: The international Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, right, the International Union. And so what's the problem? He said, Well, they're afraid of day laborers taking their work, you know, this work being done. But they don't do electricians work that's certified, licensed work? We don't do that. Okay. So it doesn't matter. They got a problem. So how do I overcome the problem, I said, "go talk to every IBEW Local in your state and get their approval." Come on. So, unfortunately, I have some friends and IBEW and I had started my labor career, you know, working at the Labor center through the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. And so we got approval from IBEW the national certified so we're the first state fund in the country that has a worker center that is an affiliate of ours, and actually sits on our board. And to me, that was like, Okay, we're finally, we're finally getting to where we need to be right, because we need voices of the community, I had been preaching this a long time to our union leaders, some of them are okay with it, many of them are still not, and that is Labour's voice alone is not strong enough to make a difference. I'm not sure we ever were strong enough to make as big a difference as we should be able to, but we're certainly not strong enough now. And so community and Labour's voices together are the only way that we're going to make the kind of progressive change the type of moral and humane change that that our communities deserve. It's gonna be together that strengthens it's why we even changed, we created we'd never had a kind of a logo for the Labor Council. Until when and I took office and, so when you look at our new design that you have CW member drew for us, you know, on it, it says union community, one voice, and so it's more than a logo, it's a way of doing business. It is only through labor and communities always together, that we're going to make these changes and,

and whether it's around, racial justice, whether it's around climate justice, it's gonna take us working together to do this.

KAREN 00:54:43: But you're retiring. So how is that going to work?

JEFF 00:54:48: So, yeah, so that's funny. Yeah, I am retiring and I'm not. I'm retiring from this particular job. And the main reason is it's not that I'm tired. It's not that I don't love what I'm doing. It's not like, I know I could have run again. And then I've been told even by those who are opposing Lynne and April, which is a minority of folks, and they're just wrong. I've been told by them that if I ran it, and they wouldn't have put anyone up against me and I would have won, but it-it's time for my opinion, white leaders, male leaders to step down. And to open it up for younger, female and leaders of color. It's just time. It's past time. So— with Lynne Dodson, and with April Simms running, I think we have, we have what we need for the next step. And I'm going to be there supporting them in every way I can doing volunteer work and other things. But I'll tell you the truth too. You know, I've spent the last four years working with community groups with the tribes with others on climate justice, and a group of seven of us co wrote initiative 1631, with a lot of legal, believe me a lot of legal help. But I, when I announced my retirement in The Stand announced a little bit earlier than I had intended to I had wanted to give April and Lynne a little bit more time before the race was on, but was forced to put that out the day I put it out, the governor called me. And he said, “Jeff, said, You're killing me, what are you doing?” I've been his strongest ally on this on this climate stuff, right. And he said, “You're killing me.” And I said, “like, Governor, I may be retiring. But that doesn't mean I'm going to stop working on this stuff.” And I said, “in fact, one sick initiative, 1631, the clean energy initiative passes, within a week, you're going to get a letter from me. And I'm going to be suggesting various labor names to populate the committee's that are built into that initiative. And my name is gonna be on there.”, “Because I want you to appoint me to, to those committees so that I can help set this thing”. And he said, “You got it. Alright, good.” So that takes care of that. I'm not disappearing, I'm gonna keep working on this stuff. But no, I am very passionate about this stuff. I, about 2012. I met for the first time, Casey Golden from climate solutions, who's a long term environmental, longtime environmental activists and just a really brilliant guy. And we met through a mutual friend, Greg Devereaux, from the Washington Federation of State Employees. And we decided to rebuild the Bleep Blue Green alliance in the state of Washington. And so he and I have been co chairing it for several years now, a number of years. And as I learned more and more about the environmental crisis, I began to recognize that it's more than an environmental crisis. It's a racial crisis. It's a socialist economic crisis. It's really all the chips are right here. Right. And, so when the Paris Climate Accords, we're coming up with that set of discussions. Come on, I started about six months before that, and I petitioned the national AFL CIO to be a part of the delegation. And I talked to the guy on staff there said, Yeah, okay, you're interested, that's great. I'll let you know. I'll let you know and let you know. It's, it's like mid November and toxic two weeks away, and I'll let you know, let you know. And it's like, come on, I want to go ahead. And so finally said, Okay, you can go. And so I went, and there were, so I got to go for the second week, not the first week. But he told me, he mentioned some of the union leaders that had gone the first week and, and told me the side trips, they were taken to the Eiffel Tower to Monet's garden, and so on and so forth. And,

JEFF 00:59:20: So every day, at eight in the morning, I got briefed by Sharon Burrows and all these international union leaders, and then some leaders from different civil society groups every afternoon, and that give us assignments of the afternoon would come back, get a briefing. I learned so much and that week, would change my life and, listening to other union leaders, other civil society leaders, I, but then there was one night there was a counter set of discussions happening in downtown Paris. And so this one night, Naomi Klein, Jeremy Corbyn from the British Labour Party, were speaking and so I had tailed down into Paris. Because the official talks were out in a suburb. So I went downtown Paris, and we're sitting in this funky basement of this building and listening to these amazing speakers, right? And they were as good as you would think they would be right. They're just totally captivating. But the thing that knocked my socks off at the end of the meeting, there

were three respondents. And the first one was I says she was around 25 years old, she was a transit worker in Paris, and she got up and in beautiful English said, Naomi Klein, Jeremy, they did a great job. Didn't they do a great job? Of course they did. She said, "I need to say this. If the planet were a bank, we would have saved it already." I'm sitting there going, Well, what did she just say? The planet, we're a bank, we would have saved it already? And I was like, they were like, I could feel electricity gone through my body. It was like, this young woman just captured it. Right. I mean, this is, it just kind of summed up the way capitalism works. Right. And and its pitfalls, right? She was absolutely right. There's plenty of money in the world, right to deal with climate change, to deal with inequality, if there was a will to do it, you know, and if there were enough people power behind it. So that one phrase kind of shaped for me, oh, my God, I've got to go back into our state and with others, other labor leaders, other community leaders, we've got to be pushing the edge of this as far and as quickly as we can, we have to be smart, we have to be strategic and diplomatic and not push. Too many union leaders, off the edge of the table, but we got to get them to the table. And so that's what we've been doing for the last four years. And I created an alarm with the Alliance for jobs and clean energy that basically wrote the initiative, I had a parallel track organization on climate in jobs where I had steel workers at the table Pulp and Paper workers Teamsters, [yatse-w?] UAW, I invited the state building trades, they came to one meeting and for years, I had the plumbers and pipefitters, they came to about three meetings, I had the painters that came to about a half dozen meetings. Anyway, so we basically wrote the labor sections of this initiative in that climate and jobs caucus, and then I took it to the alliance and argued with them. And we have built into 1631. In my opinion, it's not it's, it's a really good step forward, both on protecting our climate, bringing down carbon pollution. But it also has the best just transition language that we that if it passes will exist in this country. So we wrote into the initiative, a series of protections for workers and communities. One, we want to make sure that low wage workers, particularly in communities of color, and tribal communities, that they weren't left behind, right.

JEFF 01:03:22: And so there are incentives and energy incentives for them so that as the price of energy goes up in the in the short term, they're not negatively impacted by it. But more importantly, 35% of all the investments from these carbon fees get to go into these protected communities, and these designated communities. And so we can create community solar, we can do energy efficiency, we can create pre apprenticeship programs for young people of color that never had advantages to do this before. So that's really big. We protected union employees in energy intensive and trade exposed industries. And I know there are a lot of voters out there. And even progressives that don't understand this, right, and they're gonna say, Why did you give a break to, you know, Kaiser, aluminum or, you know, Alcoa, so on and so forth. Because they got smokestacks, and you can see it, all right. They account for 6% of the pollution, carbon dioxide pollution in our state 6%, 51% comes out of the tailpipes of our cars and trucks, right. So they're the wrong audience to be, you don't start with them. And those are good union family wage jobs and the support community, so we wanted to protect them. So we did. And then we wanted to protect those workers that will get dislocated. If you work at a refinery. If we're doing our job right. sometime over the next fifteen or twenty years, these people are going to lose their job and these are the best jobs in those communities. They paid decent money in health care wages to date, you know, we still war with the environmental community over different environmental initiatives because their notion of alright, so the workers lose their jobs, let's let's increase training dollars could go to the Community Technical College that can be retrained. That's like, that's not good enough. Yeah. And that men and women that work in the in the woods, and they chose to do that. And I think some of them can be retrained as computer programmers, but most of them, that's not what they want. They die in a classroom doing that stuff. So we said, alright, so let's build a real just transition program, what we fought for at the at the Paris Climate Accords. So I said, Okay, you got to make sure that workers that are going to be dislocated that they have wage protection for a period of time, that their health care benefits are maintained, and their pension contributions are maintained. If they're within five years of retirement, that they get a free ride to retirement, meaning full wages, full health care, full pension contributions, until they retire, we want to make sure that if you're a longer term employee there that after your wage and healthcare protection, when you go back to work, that you have wage insurance for a period of time,

so if the job you take pays less than you made before, the just transition fund picks up the difference. And that not only protects us workers and their families, but it protects the communities they live in, because they can go on making their mortgage payments, their property taxes so that schools can be funded and public services and the like. So it really is a community kind of ballast system as well. And then, of course, we're training dollars, pure counseling, because we know that, being dislocated from a job, that you've had for a number of years is rakes right up there with divorce with moving with other traumatic variants, right. So we know a trusted mentor, messengers are key. And so pure counseling, you get to hear what's available to you from someone who has been through it before, right. So we built that in. And then finally, we built in relocation expenses in case you've got to move to find that next job. It's not the burden total on your family. So we built that all in, we built it as a \$15 million fund, which is not enough money, but we wrote a clause and the initiative that says if the need is greater, so two is the fund. Okay. We've wrote it and I checked this out with a constitutional attorney. I just forgot his name. Oh, he was. He's so helpful. He's our state's leading constitution attorney, he taught at UW law school. He's semi retired now. It'll come back to me.

KAREN 01:08:01: If the need is greater.

JEFF 01:08:03: Yeah. So then then there'll be more funds, right? So so basically, so the tax goes up? No, what happens is, so at the beginning, we were charging \$15, a metric ton fee. Each year, it goes up by an escalator of \$2 a year. Okay. At the beginning, we project about \$1.3 billion a year will go into the fund, okay. And then it's divided between the Clean Energy Fund, the healthy forests and clean water fund, and then a public safety fund. The Clean Energy Fund is 70% of it, and that fund is CO directed by union labor and a business person and the clean energy sector. Alright, that fund is where the just transition fund sits, if more than \$50 million is needed, it comes out of that fund. Okay, so if you need 100 million, it'll come out of that fund. But again, that fund is 70% of the \$1.3 billion. And that 1.3 billion will rise somewhere close to \$2 billion, probably within six or seven years. And then as we're doing the job, right, it'll start coming back down. But then of course, we will have made the transition. And so there'll be better jobs for folks. Non carbon producing jobs. So that's how that works. And, I want to tell you, I've been all over around the country in the last six months talking about this. I was in Los Angeles, three Saturdays ago. The labor network for sustainability, put on the first dialogue around climate and just transition in Los Angeles and at Union leaders came. I was a keynote speaker. And I want to tell you, it was it was an amazing group of people. And they, even the building trades folks there as we walked through 1631 They were saying this is really good. This is this is important, right? You know, I look at our own building trades outstanding. Really Can you give us a call? Just crazy. I'm really excited on September 12, I've been invited to speak at UC Berkeley, the labor center, along with a lot of other organizations, is putting on a labor and climate symposium. It's a day before Governor Brown's Global Climate Summit. And I get to be on a panel with Sharon Burrows, the head of the International Confederation of Trade Unions, and she's the woman that I learned a lot of this stuff from, or at least got the, you know, the bug for this stuff. And so I have just met odd and I get to be on a panel with her. And but, you know, I know that as I've talked around the country, there are labor leaders all around that are looking to our state, if we can pass this thing. It's going to bolster their, you know, their desire and their chances of moving something in their own state. So there's so much at stake here. And so it's like, it's so politics is so hard because you never know where things stand, right? Even if you do a poll, our latest poll by Solyndra lay shows 63% of the respondents after pro and con arguments support 1631 And that 43% support it strongly. Those are incredible poll numbers. Yet at the same time, we have not been able to get Tom Stiers, we have not been able to get an akan our we've not been able to get Michael Bloomberg, you know, Bill Gates to contribute large money to this right. We have raised \$4.3 million. But British, I'm sorry, Phillips 66. Last week dumped in \$3.7 million into the opposition. Just one company though. And that's that's chicken feed to them. I mean, they can put as much money as they want to. So you know what? So this really is it's it's a David and Goliath, it's a people versus corporate muscle campaign, we just have to hope that we've done the organizing, and we'll continue to do the organizing to get people out there and not not have them be afraid of. Yeah, gas prices go up. 12 cents a gallon. Yeah, okay. Yeah. Because they're gonna go up 12 cents and

more gallon anyway. So rather, we protect the air and the water that our kids and grandkids are going to breathe and drink and, you know, do it the right way and create good jobs, or we get higher prices and greater inequality. So which ones do you want to choose?

ANGIE 01:12:57: Yeah. This has been really wonderful. And you've explained 1631 better than anyone

KAREN 01:13:07: talking points for us—

JEFF 01:13:09: Well, I don't know if you're free. But tomorrow, at what time? I think it's a two, we have the campaign coming down and some labor folks who have endorsed to talk about what we do as a labor movement, or in 1631. It's gonna be a small meeting, but it's the first of several.

ANGIE 01:13:28: Right? We're getting close to time. And so there's a few more questions that I wanted to ask you. And one of which is organized labor has suffered many blows over the year, particularly during the time that you've been involved. And for many that can be disillusioning, and discouraging. And I'm just wondering, what, what would you say is the thing that continues to give you the drive, and the vision and the hope to continue your work?

JEFF 01:14:10: That's, that's a good question. It also so really, it's two things. I look at my kids and their friends. Right. And, and I see such amazing potential, right. And I look at what we're facing, and the, this current administration and kind of the sanction that they've given to hatred and bigotry the narrow mindedness of, let's pump every barrel of oil and cubic foot of gas out of the ground, right. And I say to myself, you know, we have to double down on making progressive change so that these young people, I have real opportunities to make collective decisions together for a better planet, a better community. So that's the driving force, but then the other driving force is listening to these young people. Right? I am. So you know it. I am amazed at the openness with which they address issues, right. That issues that for my generation, you know, it took us longer to some of us longer to get to, they're so much more open about whether it's immigration, whether it's LGBTQ rights, whether it's, you know, climate, I mean, they just can't it right. And so, so I'm very impressed with the young leadership, I got to address our union summer intern program a few weeks back, and, it was this particular group, I think it was there 20 All young women, it was not a young amongst, and it was mostly young women of color. And it was like, I was just enthralled. It's like, so they're, they're not getting paid much. And they're devoting their summer to learning about labor and progressive cause it's like, wow, and they were phone banking, and they were door knocking. I'm thinking yeah, this gives me hope.

ANGIE 01:16:21: Great, cool, great. How do you mentor people, because you have not aligned? And I know that you have worked with a lot of people and you. I'm sure you've mentored a lot. So just give us a few pointers on how you mentor?

JEFF 01:16:41: Yeah well, I hope I'm a decent mentor I think. Yeah. I've got pretty exacting standards for myself. But when it comes to young people, and folks that I hire, so what— I'm really pleased with the staff that I've hired over the years that I've been in this year, it is a it is [inaudible] staff of color for the most part now. But really impressive young people, right. And the way I mentor is mostly to stay out of their way. Okay. I mean, we have regular meetings, where we talk about the issues, but I want to hear what they think, you know, I want to think, here's the problem we're addressing, how do you think we solve this? How do you how do we, how do we make progress with this. And so it's more, it's more encouraging them along than saying, We got to do it this way or that way, right? That's just, that's not mentoring, that's just, you know, so it's really, it's giving them the space, the freedom to be creative, as well as the space to make mistakes. Because that's how I learned, you learn from making mistake, you have to make mistakes, right. And so and so that's basically how I mentor, it's more of a hands off thing. It's kind of like, when you teach, so I taught for, taught for a total of about nine

years, I did two years of grammar school teaching back way back, the college teaching that I did, sometimes it's unsatisfying, right? Because you got a group of students there, right, whatever age they are, and it's like, not a whole lot, sometimes there's not a lot of feedback, and you leave that I make a difference or not, right. And I remember, we had this open house one night, and this student that I'd had a couple of years back was in a graduate program at Rutgers University, and she came up to me and said, Jeff, and floss tell you, you're a really good teacher. I said, well, thank you. Why do you say that? And she said, Well, and I'm at another institution, right? And, yeah, and it's just lecture format. And it's, read this many pages, and then they drone on at you. And that's good. I'm getting a good education. But in your class, was dialogue, we talked, we questioned you. And she said, at the time, I didn't appreciate it. In fact, sometimes I felt intimidated or nervous. But now, I recognize that that's what built a passion. Right. So—

KAREN 01:19:27: May I ask you one question. Mike always says for interviews, we should ask this question to our interviewing. That's what surprises you what surprises me? Yeah. That's a good question. I'll be don't have time.

JEFF 01:19:45: No, you know, I know Pro and there's a positive and negative that. I think what surprises me on the negative side is that sometimes, you know, be self critical and our union The movement or leaders can be so inward facing so narrow minded, that I believe that if they were paid to build their own gallows, they would do it. Right. And that's sad. That is really sad, you know? And I see that in union leaders that even in this campaign now that say, oh, Labour Councils been too much about social justice, as if that isn't what the labor movement is about, and we're about wages, hours and working conditions. Yeah, that's true. And that's a component of social justice. But by itself, it doesn't mean much. So I get surprised when I continue to hear the same arguments I heard 40 years ago, it's like, seriously? Have we not been through enough? Have you not seen enough change in the world that says that strategy didn't work? And then on the positive side, I'm surprised at, again, when I talk to younger folks, you know, their commitment to, to doing stuff because they're portrayed as a society that is just totally focused on screens and games. And what and I have to admit, there were times when I was collecting signatures for the minimum wage paid sick day initiative in 1631, where young people would on their screens, headphones, and walk right past people, attracting people that look like me, right? To decide, but when you can actually engage them in the right setting, it's like, you know, they give me hope for the future.

ANGIE 01:21:50: Yeah, and what advice would you give to all of us? I'm here kind of wrapping up this section as part of your career and moving on to the next.

JEFF 01:22:05: So I think, I think the advice my mother gave me is the advice I'd give anyone else, stand up for what you think is right. Because if you do that others will stand up to be open to a diversity of thought, and to people because your life will be richer. And whatever you're working on will be richer, and work hard, every day. Have fun, but work hard every day, you have no idea what tomorrow is gonna bring. So, that's both for self preservation, but it's because as we work hard, we're able to make better changes.

ANGIE 01:22:46: It's wonderful, [harks/] back to the advice that your mother gave you starting out in life. That's what you pass on. So that's beautiful. So, thank you so very much for checking out this time to do this, to do this interview, and we really appreciate the work that you have done. And we look forward to working with you and and others—

KAREN 01:23:13: 1631 Whatever else decide to

JEFF 01:23:17: Appreciate that. Yeah. Well, thank you. I'm honored that you asked me to do this.

ANGIE 01:23:21: And also the best of luck in your retirement from this job, and I hope they got lots of time for fun in the family and relaxation to— go happen. All right, thank you. This concludes our interview with Jeff Johnson.